

HB 150

February 5, 2015

Presented by Jim Kropp

Senate Fish and Game Committee

Mr. Chairman and committee members, I am Jim Kropp, Chief of Law Enforcement for the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP). I am here today on behalf of the Director in support of House Bill 150.

This bill addresses two key issues: harassment of people engaged in the lawful pursuit of wildlife or fish, and the use of motorized vehicles as a means to stir up or push wildlife so as to make them available for hunting. The essence of the bill, as Representative Flynn has explained, is to further deter these kinds of activities by increasing both the monetary penalties as well as providing for the suspension of a person's hunting, fishing and trapping privileges by the court if convicted. We believe these penalties are warranted and can also assist in situations where individuals try to interfere with the legal taking of wildlife. They will be helpful in situations such as we witnessed this past fall, where large concentrations of elk near accessible roads resulted in the unlawful taking of animals, and gave hunters everywhere a black eye. Additionally, this bill is part of what needs to be a larger effort that includes working with landowners and hunters, considering possible changes in seasons, regulations, boundaries and a concerted public education effort.

Penalties do not guarantee compliance. However, we believe they are just and appropriate, and underscore public sentiment about these activities. They will provide yet another tool to address hunter ethics. FWP urges the committee's support of HB 150, and I am available for questions.